

Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (NVLTCOP)



Office of the State
Long-Term Care
Ombudsman

Promoting Quality - Protecting Rights

*Serving the Jurisdictions of Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun,
through their Area Agencies on Aging*



THE UPDATE

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World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is June 15. Each year, hundreds of thousands of older persons are abused, neglected, and exploited. According to the Administration of Aging, elders throughout the United States lose an estimated \$2.6 billion or more annually due to elder financial abuse and exploitation, funds that could have been used to pay for basic needs such as housing, food, and medical care.

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Unfortunately, no one is immune to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It occurs in every demographic, and can happen to anyone — a family member, a neighbor, even you. Yet it is estimated that only about one in five of those crimes are ever discovered.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was launched on June 15, 2006 by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the World Health Organization at the United Nations. The purpose of this day is to provide an opportunity for communities around the world to promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older persons by raising awareness of the cultural, social, economic and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect. In addition, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is in support of the United Nations International Plan of Action acknowledging the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue.

Elder abuse has many forms and symptoms:

Financial Abuse/Exploitation

- ♦ Lack of amenities victim could afford • Vulnerable elder/adult “voluntarily” giving uncharacteristically excessive financial reimbursement/gifts for needed care and companionship • Caregiver has control of elder’s money but is failing to provide for elder’s needs • Vulnerable elder/adult has signed property transfers (Power of Attorney, new will, etc.) but is unable to comprehend the transaction or what it means

Psychological/Emotional Abuse

- ♦ Unexplained or uncharacteristic changes in behavior, such as withdrawal from normal activities, unexplained changes in alertness, other • Caregiver isolates elder (doesn’t let anyone into the home or speak to the elder) • Caregiver is verbally aggressive or demeaning, controlling, overly concerned about spending money, or uncaring

Physical/Sexual Abuse

- ♦ Inadequately explained fractures, bruises, welts, cuts, sores or burns • Unexplained sexually transmitted diseases

Neglect

- ♦ Lack of basic hygiene, adequate food, or clean and appropriate clothing • Lack of medical aids (glasses, walker, teeth, hearing aid, medications) • Person with dementia left unsupervised • Person confined to bed is left without care • Home cluttered, filthy, in disrepair, or having fire and safety hazards • Home without adequate facilities (stove, refrigerator, heat, cooling, working plumbing, and electricity) • Untreated pressure “bed” sores (pressure ulcers)

What Should I Do if I Suspect Elder Abuse?

Experts believe that for every one case of elder abuse or neglect reported, as many as 23 cases go unreported. Therefore, it is important that suspicions of abuse be reported.

REPORT YOUR CONCERNS.

Remember: Most cases of elder abuse go undetected. Don’t assume that someone has already reported a suspicious situation.

To report suspected abuse in the community or in a long-term care facility, contact your local Adult Protective Services agency:

City of Alexandria: (703) 746-5778

Arlington County: (703) 228-1350

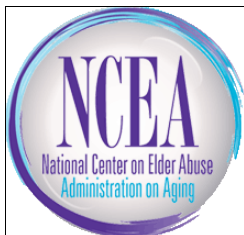
Fairfax County: (703) 324-7450

Loudoun County: (703) 777-0353



If you or someone you know is in a life threatening situation or immediate danger, contact 911 or the local police or sheriff.

Twelve Things That Anyone Can Do To Prevent Elder Abuse



- 1). Learn the **signs of elder abuse and neglect**.
- 2). **Call or visit an elderly loved one** and ask how he or she is doing.
- 3). Provide a respite **break for a caregiver**.
- 4). Ask your bank manager to train tellers on **how to detect elder financial abuse**.
- 5). **Ask your doctor** to ask you and all other senior patients about possible family violence in their lives.
- 6). **Contact your local Adult Protective Services or Long-Term Care Ombudsman** to learn how to support their work helping at-risk elders and adults with disabilities.
- 7). Organize a **"Respect Your Elders" essay or poster contest** in your child's school.
- 8). Ask your religious congregation's leader to **give a talk about elder abuse** at a service or to put a message about elder abuse in the bulletin.
- 9). **Volunteer to be a friendly visitor** to a nursing home resident or to a homebound senior in your neighborhood.
- 10). Send a letter to your local paper, radio or TV station suggesting that they cover **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day** (June 15) or **Grandparents Day** in September.
- 11). Dedicate your **bikeathon/marathon/other event** to elder mistreatment awareness and prevention.
- 12). **Join the Ageless Alliance**. Ageless Alliance connects people of all ages who stand united for the dignity of older adults and for the elimination of elder abuse. You can join (it's free) and get involved at agelessalliance.org

Volunteer Advocates Needed!

For Residents in Long-Term Care

The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is looking for people who are empathetic, diplomatic, assertive and skilled communicators to be Volunteer Ombudsmen.

As an ombudsman you will be assigned to visit a local nursing or assisted living facility, working to ensure that the residents' rights are being protected and helping residents with problems that they are unable to resolve alone.

Volunteer Ombudsmen dedicate four (4) hours per week for one year. Visits must occur between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays. On-going training and support provided.

The next initial 3-day training will be
September 16, 18 and 25, 2015
(September 28, 2015 Save the Date)
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For more information, please call
(703) 324-5861 or visit
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/LTCOmbudsman



Access Services: Providing Library Services to People with Disabilities

The Access Services branch of the Fairfax County Public Library removes barriers to library services for people with permanent and temporary disabilities. If you or someone you know cannot read standard printed materials or cannot get to a library branch, they can help.

Access Services has a Talking Book service, which provides audio books and playing equipment free of charge by mail. Braille books and more than forty magazines in audio or Braille are also available. Individuals of all ages who are unable to use standard print due to visual impairment or physical limitations are eligible. An application form is required for certification. Access Services administers the Talking Book Program for Fairfax County and for the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church on behalf of the Library of Congress. People who live outside of our service area may call 1-888-657-7323 to be connected to the Talking Book library serving their city or county.

Readers in Fairfax County who are unable to travel to their neighborhood library branch due to disability, illness or frailty may be eligible for free home delivery of library materials. Written certification may be required. Access Services also provides rotating collections of large-print and regular print library books to senior centers, retirement communities and other eligible organizations located in Fairfax County.

For more information about any of these services, please call 703-324-8380 during business hours, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Mondays through Fridays or visit our web page at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/as> or email access@fairfaxcounty.gov.



Need Information or Have a Concern About Nursing or Assisted Living Facilities?

Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

12011 Government Center Parkway,
Suite 708

Fairfax, VA 22035

Offices hours are Monday through Friday
from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Intake Line: 703-324-5861 TTY: 711

Fax: 703-324-3575

Email us at:

NVLT COP@FairfaxCounty.Gov

To view information on the NVLT COP website and to see the Investigation and Complaint Log, please go to:

www.FairfaxCounty.Gov/LTCOmbudsman

What an Ombudsman does:

- ♦ **Advocates** for improving the quality of life for persons receiving long-term care services
- ♦ **Resolves complaints** against long-term care providers through **counseling, negotiation, and investigation**
- ♦ **Provides information** about long-term care providers to help make an informed decision
- ♦ **Educates** the community about long-term care issues
- ♦ **Visits** residents of long-term care facilities on a weekly basis through our volunteer program
- ♦ **Trains** long-term care staff on long-term care related information
- ♦ **Consults** with providers

New Volunteer Ombudsmen Complete Training Class

The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program recently completed the 2015 spring training for New Volunteer Ombudsmen. This is the second year that we have offered two new volunteer trainings per year. The training included wonderful guest speakers who, as experts on the subjects, shared their passion with us and the trainees. A few of the topics on the agenda included Residents' Rights, Advocating for the Resident with Alzheimer's disease and other Dementias, Ethics and Confidentiality, Problem Identification and Investigative Skills, Infection Control and Boundaries.

Trainee comments included: "Excellent!" "Fabulous, dynamic speaker." "Very, very good and helpful." "The training and the program is very impressive!" "Top-Notch!"

We are so very grateful for our new volunteers and for our established volunteer team. Without their dedication, knowledge and compassion, we would not be able to do the work that we do. Our new volunteers will begin their work in their assigned Assisted Living and/or Nursing communities in April, May and June 2015.





The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all programs and services. To request reasonable accommodations or alternate formats, call 703-324-5861 (voice); 711 (TTY).

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